

and also poses the question of the possibility of a distinctly feminine professionalism.

While the authors in *Rethinking Professionalism* engage with the central issue of professionalism to varying degrees, what does emerge is a collection of scholarly essays focused largely on lesser-known practitioners working primarily in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Canada's great "woman painter" Emily Carr does not feature as subject for discussion in any of the chapters, and when more recognized artists are discussed it is their more obscure accomplishments that are highlighted. That is the case with Anne Savage (1896-1971) who was a painter and founding member of Montréal's Beaver Hall Group—erroneously often viewed as a collective of women artists—and contemporary of the Group of Seven. Alena Buis' chapter focuses on Savage's work as a teacher and broadcaster, critically analyzing Savage's CBC programme *The Development of Art in Canada* (1939). Buis explores how Savage's lectures on art in Canada were written to address a broad public while furthering a nationalistic narrative that had previously been constructed by Canadian cultural elites. Buis does show that Savage's professional position was a subordinate one, as her broadcasts were written with help from A.Y. Jackson who had a vested interest in the shaping of Canadian art history. Yet Savage's accomplishment of making art accessible to all regardless of class or location is markedly contrary to established and elitist understandings of Canadian art and is worthy of attention.

What the framework of professionalism allows for is an exploration of women's contributions in the cultural sphere that is more far-reaching in scope. Women's roles in the formation and running of cultural institutions is considered in two essays, one by Lianne

McTavish that examines Alice Lusk Webster's efforts to professionalize the New Brunswick Museum, and Anne Whitelaw's study of women working at the Edmonton Art Gallery between 1923 and 1970. The latter chapter is included in the final section of the book that considers the limitations of professionalism. Whitelaw's consideration of Maud Bowman's (1875-1944) work as director of the Edmonton Museum of Art (as it was then known) illuminates the difficulties in studying voluntarism in museums for, in spite of her role as director, Bowman was seen as a volunteer more often than as a professional. The closing section of the volume is a particularly strong one, allowing for discussions of Aboriginal art and craft including a comprehensive account by Shelley Farrell Racette of the challenges facing scholars writing Aboriginal women into Canadian art history.

The real strength of this collection of essays is that it showcases a number of women who remain un(der)recognized in the history of Canadian culture. Jennifer Salahub looks at the photography of Hannah Maynard (1834-1918), linking her images to needlework and domestic textile production. Salahub notes that there is limited critical engagement with Maynard's photographs even though her experimental work of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century is remarkable and could conceivably be said to anticipate the avant-garde movements of Dada and Surrealism had her work been known more broadly. This point of limited critical engagement with women's work is a recurrent one and can be extended to most case studies included in *Rethinking Professionalism*. One can only hope that by shedding light on a wide range of women's accomplishments in the arts new critical explorations of the history of women and art in Canada will begin to emerge.

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## FEMINIST CONSTITUTIONALISM: GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES

Beverley Baines, Daphne Barak-Erez, and Tsvi Kahana, Eds.

Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012

### REVIEWED BY MEGAN GAUCHER

Aiming to "rethink constitutionalism in a manner that addresses and reflects feminist thought and experience," *Feminist Constitutionalism: Global Perspectives* provides a comprehensive comparative examination of the complexity of constitutionalism as a viable option for feminist mobilization. Baines, Barak-Erez, and Kahana argue that the contributions—both actual and potential—feminism presents for traditional understandings of constitutionalism have largely been ignored; the impact feminist analysis has and continues to have on constitutional law, and vice versa, warrants attention.

Chapters by Nedelsky, Case, and Dixon and Nussbaum address potential contributions feminist constitutionalism could make to mainstream feminist debates concerning the division of household labour, the institution of marriage, and reproductive freedom respec-

tively. The authors outline the work of feminism in challenging the patriarchal foundations of constitution development and execution. Furthermore, they provide insight into how these debates can result in a reconceptualization of certain values initially intended by constitutional framers to further subordinate this particular population.

Subsequent chapters challenge the idea that feminist contribution to constitutionalism is uni-dimensional. While the authors recognize that constitutions have historically been and continue to be developed without female input, there remain opportunities for mobilization. Barak-Erez's chapter on feminist interpretation, and Roberts' chapter on female judges in Australia explore the utility of a feminist interpretation of the law while accounting for the challenges female judges face as they attempt to implement this interpretation within a male dominated forum. These experiences are often compounded by the limited capacity of legal mechanisms to assess gender-based equality, as demonstrated in Froc's chapter on the *Charter* and Loper's chapter on constitutional developments in Hong Kong.

Similarly, the success of feminist constitutionalism relies on the presence of feminist legislators as well. McDonagh and Monopoli argue in their chapter on the political representation of women in the United States that the inherently masculine nature of political institutions makes it difficult for women to gain access; moreover, those who are able to gain access often experience isolation from their male colleagues or are relegated to those policy domains traditionally conceived of as "female oriented." On the other hand, Rodriguez-Ruiz and Rubio-Marin contend that constitutionally imposed gender parity in state legislatures provides an ideal environment for feminist contribu-

tion. Finally, Katz examines how the success of female involvement in constitution drafting is context-specific and varies by country. This should not however deter us from recognizing the unique insight women bring to this process.

In addition to the need for feminist decision-makers, feminist constitutionalism depends on the mobilization of women's rights organizations. Constitutional challenges made by these groups have effectively challenged the so-called gender neutrality of constitutions and have forced courts to reinterpret rights in order to accommodate gender-based differences. The success of feminist constitutionalism is therefore multifarious and involves multiple levels of engagement.

This book's broad scope is both its greatest strength and weakness. While *Feminist Constitutionalism* effectively captures the complexity of feminist interaction with constitutional law, this book is premised on several problematic assumptions. First, the chapters fail to make any type of distinction between women and feminists, often conflating the two. The authors equate acts of non-feminist action with feminists being stifled by their patriarchal environment, ultimately ignoring the ways in which non-feminist women (judges, legislators, activists) have used constitutions in an attempt to block feminist gains. Second, the book addresses intersectionality in the last few chapters; however, the issue of access remains under-addressed. While constitutionalism does provide opportunities for feminist gain, it is imperative that we account for the costs (e.g. financial, political, emotional) that are associated with such action. This leads to a third and related assumption—that all feminists are supportive of constitutional law as an appropriate forum for mobilization. During the same-sex

marriage debates in Canada, feminist scholars warned of the implications the extension of marital benefits to same-sex couples would have for lesbian relationships, as the patriarchal family fosters and maintains the subordination of women (Herman). This book focuses primarily on liberal feminist objectives, that being political inclusion, ignoring other feminist groups that might oppose such action. Finally, the book assumes that feminist constitutionalism leads to societal change; however, as Epp contends, the success of constitutional change—particularly with respect to human rights—depends on the presence of rights consciousness in popular culture (Epp). Feminist constitutionalism is therefore a necessary but not sufficient condition for societal change. That being said, *Feminist Constitutionalism* is a rewarding read that deserves thoughtful attention.

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